

Meeting Minutes

OLIVER RANCH CORE GROUP CCSN Curriculum & Professional Development Center June 15, 2004

The meeting was called to order at 8:10 a.m. with the following attendees present:

Kathy August, Blaine Benedict, Kim Blanc, Paul Buck, Christy Falba, Nancy Flagg, Patrick Fleming, Laura Flynn, David Frommer, Helen Mortenson, Rob Mrowka, Alan O'Neill, Jackson Ramsey, Michael Reiland, Henry Tom, Les Wallach, Billie Young,

1. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the May 18, 2004 meeting were approved. Billie Young requested that acronyms be fully spelled and that the reference on page two to "wells" at the Oliver Ranch site be changed to "test wells." All changes have been reflected in the permanent minutes (*on file in UNLV Public Lands Initiative office and BLM office*).

2. UNLV/CESU Update

Nancy Flagg provided information on the task order the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has signed with the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV). There are four specific tasks named, with deliverables specified for each task. The tasks are Project Coordination, Educational Curricular Coordination, Operations Analysis, and Communications Coordination. The agreement calls for quarterly reports to the BLM, and regular updates will be provided to the core committee at each meeting to keep everyone informed.

Rob Mrowka asked for clarification about UNLV's role. Michael Reiland emphasized that it is a coordinating role, pulling together the work that has already been done or is in progress by committees in order to produce a product. Rob noted the use of action words in the task order, which implies more than coordination. Paul Buck indicated that the Educational Programs Subcommittee is moving ahead with its work on the curriculum over the summer. Both Michael and Nancy indicated that UNLV's work would be done in close collaboration with the committees and core group.

Nancy reported on the work UNLV has undertaken thus far. She has reviewed as many notes and minutes that she has had at her disposal and invited committee members to provide any additional information they may have from their records. UNLV will compile the documents into an archive to preserve a more formal history of the project since its inception. Similarly, work has started on a written timeline of the Oliver Ranch project, with major actions that have occurred since 1993. Nancy distributed a draft copy of the timeline (*on file in UNLV Public Lands Initiative office and BLM office*) and invited additional input from committee members. When completed, the historical timeline will provide a common point of reference whenever anyone provides information about the project to public audiences.

In addition, Nancy reported that she is working on general talking points for the project, which would provide a common reference on key aspects of the project, such as water conservation, site stewardship, sustainable design elements, etc. Eventually, this document will form the basis for

an FAQ on an Oliver Ranch website but can also be used for public presentations, brochures, and the like. A draft will be shared at the next meeting.

UNLV is hiring a technical administrator for its Public Lands Initiative office. This person will provide initial assistance on creating an Oliver Ranch website. The job candidates were given an exercise to develop a mock website as part of the interview process, so the beginnings of an eventual site have already begun.

Nancy noted that UNLV has placed a solicitation for freelance public relations/marketing assistance for the Oliver Ranch project. The solicitation will be posted to the websites of the Public Relations Society of America and the American Marketing Association, but she invited the core group to provide additional leads on any people they may know who would be interested. Billie Young asked that the notice be e-mailed to the group.

As part of the overall communications plan, there will need to be a core group of people who are willing to make presentations to civic groups about the project, especially after the conceptual designs are completed. Nancy asked the attendees to begin thinking about whether they would be interested in serving in this capacity.

Nancy emphasized the strong need to keep the committees working on their charges and, where needed, to revitalize the charge of individual committees. She has reviewed old minutes and has found some issues that remain unresolved, which will be assigned to committees or the core group as appropriate. She plans to call each committee chair to review their current tasks. Committee chairs will be asked to provide written reports in advance of each core group meeting, which will be sent out with the agenda and minutes in an effort to keep everyone on the core committee fully informed.

Nancy welcomed input from all attendees about issues that need to be handled, outreach that should occur, keeping communication lines open, etc. She will make an attempt to reconnect with people who have not been attending core group meetings to find out if they are still interested in participating. New attendees are always welcome.

3. Line and Space Update

A. Les Wallach and Henry Tom provided an extensive overview of meetings, site visits, and school visitations that occurred May 13, 18-19, and 25-27 (*copy of report on file in UNLV Public Lands Initiative office and BLM office*). The activities included:

- A phone conference with Dale Etheridge of CCSN regarding the observatory.
- Visits to 5th graders at 4 elementary schools, include Blue Diamond Elementary, to discuss the students' vision of the science school.
- An evening site visit to Oliver Ranch to experience night-time conditions at the site.
- A meeting at the Oliver Ranch site to discuss the cultural history of Native Americans on the site.
- An informational meeting with the Red Rock Canyon Citizens Advisory Council.
- A walking tour of Oliver Ranch.
- A tour of Blue Diamond Hill.
- A meeting to discuss the scope of the Wild Horse & Burro Facility

Jackson Ramsey requested that a detailed discussion be held about moving the observatory to the Red Rock Visitors Center site when the programming sessions for the visitor center are

scheduled. The impact on the building footprint and space allocation especially need to be considered.

Les noted that the feedback from Blue Diamond Elementary School students may suggest giving those students a different role in the Oliver Ranch Science School. The potential for developing a mentoring program throughout the school was mentioned, as was allowing more frequent visits per year from the Blue Diamond students.

The meeting with Native American representatives yielded a suggestion to tie some exhibits or native plantings to the scientific methods originally used by the indigenous peoples on the site, such as how plantings were tied to star movement.

The committee discussed at some length methods for future contact with the residents of Blue Diamond. Ideas included holding workshop-style meetings on a regular basis either at the Oliver Ranch site or a neutral location, having lunch with small groups of Blue Diamond residents at Bonnie Springs or private homes, and Rob Mrowka offered to facilitate a meeting between Line and Space and the Clark County Commissioner for that area.

B. Tour of Las Vegas Springs Preserve:

Les Wallach and Henry Tom reported on a tour they took of the Las Vegas Springs Preserve on June 14. The project covers 180 acres and will eventually feature \$166 million in capital improvements, including a 25,000 s.f. visitor center, a desert living center, gardens, trails with interpretive exhibits, and the Nevada State Museum, which is relocating to the site. Henry noted the need for collaborative work between the Oliver Ranch/Red Rock Visitor Center projects and the Las Vegas Springs Preserve project so that the visitor centers and activities complement each other rather than duplicate.

Paul Buck suggested that the Educational Programs Committee tour the Las Vegas Springs Preserve. Michael said he would provide the contact name to Paul. Loretta Asay emphasized the Clark County School District's desire for curricular continuity among these projects, with activities different yet complementary at each location. It may be useful to coordinate activities so that the Springs Preserve focuses on 6th or 7th graders while Oliver Ranch focuses upon 5th graders.

Alan O'Neill seconded the need for coordination and integration among the Oliver Ranch, Red Rock Visitor Center, and Las Vegas Springs Preserve projects. If done right, each location can tell a different story while also reinforcing the others.

C. Update on Programming Document:

Les Wallach and Henry Tom provided an update on the status of the programming document for the Science School. The first draft has been delivered to Pat Fleming and will undergo an initial review by the Design Oversight Committee at its June 15 meeting. In response to a question from Nancy Flagg, Michael noted that the other Oliver Ranch committees will be given an opportunity to provide written comments on the document when it is ready for distribution.

4. Update on Red Rock Canyon Capital Improvements

Michael Reiland provided an update on other capital improvement projects at Red Rock National Conservation Area, as all of these projects – along with Oliver Ranch – can be viewed as a whole. The programming and design phase of the Red Rock Visitor Center will begin in the near future. The BLM wants to mirror the process used on the Oliver Ranch project. Michael reported that the environmental assessment (EA) is starting on the campground improvements. He also

reported that the Red Springs project is underway, with interpretive and public areas being added. He requested that the Wild Horse & Burro facility be discussed at the next core committee meeting. This facility is part of the same Round 4 nomination as the Science School, and thus equal attention needs to be given to it.

David Frommer asked about the timeline for pending Round 5 nominations. Michael reported that the interagency executive committee will meet on June 16 to finalize the recommendations to the Interior Secretary. In approximately 6 weeks, those recommendations will be formally transmitted to the Secretary. A decision on Round 5 nominations may not occur until October or later. The conceptual design phase of the Science School should be finished by December 10, which – assuming the Round 5 approvals are known by then – would allow the Round 5 pieces to be added to the project if they are approved. Michael reported that on the preliminary list the Oliver Ranch capital improvement nomination is currently ranked #3. The Conservation Initiative nomination is currently ranked #11. He anticipates that both nominations will move forward to the Secretary.

5. Project Timeline

Michael Reiland showed the committee a draft copy of the project timeline he has designed, which responds to a request made at the last meeting to keep the core group updated regularly on the overall project. Michael is making some final refinements and additions to the timeline and then will distribute it as a “pdf” file.

6. Curriculum / Design Linkages

Discussion of the linkages between the Science School curriculum and the building design were deferred to the next meeting. Paul Buck reported that the Educational Programs Committee will look at how to incorporate the green building concepts into the curriculum, as well as other ideas.

7. CCSD Video

Loretta Asay and Laura Flynn presented a video compilation of the sessions Line and Space held with 5th grade students at four local elementary schools in late May. The students commented on the design features they prefer and, at Hancock Elementary, displayed student-designed architectural models for the sleeping areas of the science school. In general, the students favored larger sleeping rooms of 6-8 children, liked the idea of hammocks as well as bunk beds, favored having windows in the sleeping area, and suggested group meeting/working areas within their bunk group.

8. Committee Reports

Michael reported on plans to establish a Building Committee. This committee will provide the BLM with input on specific design and construction issues as they arise; as such, it will replace some of the duties of the Design Oversight Committee (DOC). David Frommer noted that the DOC will provide input to the Building Committee and will focus on more general design issues that protect the integrity of the site ecology and guide the overall development of the science school and wild horse and burro facility

A. Operations Committee

Committee Chair Jackson Ramsey reported that the committee has not met recently. He noted that a mission statement and list of charges was submitted to the BLM last October. He and Michael will discuss the next steps for the committee.

B. *Wild Horse and Burro Committee*

Committee Chair Billie Young reported that the committee is putting together a plan for tours of area wild horse and burro facilities.

C. *Educational Programs Committee*

Committee Chair Paul Buck reported that the committee had an upcoming meeting scheduled. There is good representation from the Clark County School District, and DRI staff have been added in order to establish a closer connection between science and education. The committee will develop a meeting schedule for the summer months.

D. *Other Uses Committee*

No report.

E. *Fund-Raising & Partnerships Committee*

Committee Chair Blaine Benedict reported that the committee has not met in three months, and it may be premature for the committee to meet until the project is further along.

F. *Design Oversight Committee*

Committee Chair David Frommer reported that the committee meets monthly, usually a day prior to the core committee meeting. The group is meeting June 15 to review the Line and Space programming draft and to discuss its role vis a vis the new Building Advisory Committee.

9. Future Core Group Meetings

A schedule of future meetings was set for the third Tuesday of each month, starting at 8:30 a.m. and ending at approximately 10:30 a.m. Agendas, minutes, and committee reports will be e-mailed to members approximately one week in advance of each meeting.

Date	Location	Address
July 20, 2004	BLM	4701 N. Torrey Pines Dr. (Just north of Rancho & Craig Rd.)
August 17, 2004	UNLV	Paradise Campus – Bldg. 400, Rm. 401 (Corner of Tropicana & Swenson)
September 21, 2004	UNLV**	Paradise Campus – Bldg. 400, Rm. 401 (Corner of Tropicana & Swenson)
October 19, 2004	BLM	4701 N. Torrey Pines Dr. (Just north of Rancho & Craig Rd.)

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

**NOTE: Originally, the September meeting was to be held at the CCSD Curriculum & Professional Development Center. Following the June 15 meeting, the Clark County School District learned that its facility was not available for the September meeting, so the location was moved to UNLV.